

COMPOSITE TRUNKING

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An Internet router treats plural output ports with a common destination as a composite port. A routing table uses the IP address to determine a composite trunk to which the packet is to be forwarded. A forwarding table identifies a route along a routing fabric within the router to a specific output port of the composite port. Output ports and fabric routes are selected to maintain order within a flow by routing the flow along a single fabric route to a single output trunk. The forwarding table may favor output ports which are nearest to a packet input port, and the forwarding table may be modified to dynamically balance load across the trunks of a composite trunk.